

STATE SENATOR • HANSEN CLARKE • 1ST DISTRICT

Clarke Press Release

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SEN. CLARKE ASKS COMMUNITY TO HELP LITTLE KAYTYA DICKERSON 3-YEAR-OLD DETROITER NEEDS EXPENSIVE BRAIN SURGERY

LANSING- State Senator Hansen Clarke (D-Detroit) announced today that he is organizing a fundraising event for Sunday, April 11 to raise money for 3-year-old Detroit resident Kaytya Dickerson. Ms. Dickerson suffers from a very rare brain disorder and needs surgery that is projected to cost her family more than \$18,000.

"I'm begging everyone in our community who has the financial means to help this little girl, to please do so," said Sen. Clarke. "This child has suffered too much already. If we can relieve Kaytya's pain and discomfort for even a little while, I think it's the only decent thing to do."

Kaytya suffers from a rare disorder called Lipomameningolenephalocele that causes the human brain to protrude out of the skull cavity. The little girl's insurance is refusing to pay for surgery that would improve the quality of her life on the grounds that it will not extend her life expectancy. Currently, Kaytya is unable to walk, talk, sit-up or hold her head up due to the weight of the excess water on her brain. Some of the other medical issues that Kaytya deals with are frequent pain, ear infection, seizures, and pneumonia.

Dr. Ben Carson of John Hopkins Hospital, a Detroit native and one of the top neurosurgeons in the world, has agreed to perform Kaytya's much needed surgery. The procedure will reduce the swelling on Kaytya's brain and even though her brain will still protrude from her skull, the mass will not be as large.

"It's kind of like shrinking something from the size of a watermelon to the size of a grapefruit. In doing so the surgery will stabilize the part of the brain that is still protruding," said Kaytya's mom, Leanna Dickerson. Kaytya is scheduled to have surgery on April 26, 2004.

In order for her to receive the surgery Leanna Dickerson must have the full cost of the surgery deposited in John Hopkins account no later than the close of business April 18, 2004, otherwise Kaytya will be removed from the waiting list at John Hopkins Hospital. The expected cost of the surgery is \$18,040.00, plus the cost of follow up care.

The fundraiser will be held April 11, Easter Sunday at Bert's on Broadway, 1315 Broadway, downtown Detroit. If you can not attend the event but want to help please send all donations to the Kaytya Dickerson Cranial Surgical Fund, 9930 Rutherford Detroit, MI 48227. Donations of all sizes are appreciated.

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